

PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO DESIGNATE *RHYNCHONELLA REFRACTIFRONS* BITTNER, 1890, AS THE TYPE-SPECIES OF THE NOMINAL GENUS *NORELLA* BITTNER, 1890 (PHYLUM BRACHIOPODA, CLASS ARTICULATA). Z.N.(S.) 1445

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The generic name *Norella* Bittner, 1890 (*Abh. k.-k. geol. Reichsanst.* 14 : 315) has been in general use in only one taxonomic sense ever since its first publication. In this usage it denotes a group of Triassic rhynchonelloid brachiopods of unusual form, with the dorsal (brachial) valve deeply sulcate. In nearly all other brachiopods of this group, the dorsal valve is convexly folded to a greater or less degree, and it is the ventral (pedicle) valve that bears a median sinus. In ontogenetic studies of Jurassic rhynchonelloids, S. S. Buckman (1918, *Palaeont. Indica* (N.S.) 3(2) : 1-299) claimed that the dorsal valve is sulcate in the early growth-stages of many of these forms, before the normal median dorsal fold is developed, and coined the terms "norella stage" and "norelliform" to denote this condition. More recently (1959, *J. Paleont.* 33 : 330) I have established a subfamily NORELLINAE to contain *Norella* and five related genera. Under the Rules, however, it appears that the nominal type-species of the genus is a species with a dorsal median fold, similar to the Lower Jurassic genus *Homoeorhynchia* S. S. Buckman, 1918, and it is the object of this application to prevent the confusing transfer of the generic name from one group of species to another that would be caused by the strict application of the Rules.

2. Bittner included several species in his new genus *Norella*, but he did not designate or indicate any one of them as the type-species. The first species mentioned was "*Rhynchonella sellaris* Lbe. sp." (*op. cit.* : 315), but he did not describe or figure this species, which seems to have been cited first merely because it is geologically the oldest. His chief emphasis throughout was on his own species *Rhynchonella refractifrons* (: 34). However, Hall & Clarke (1894, *N.Y. State geol. Surv.*, 13th Ann. Rep. (1893) : 833) designated "*Norella sellaris* Laube" as type-species, while still following Bittner's emphasis and using one of his figures of *Norella refractifrons* to illustrate the genus.

3. It is clearly necessary before proceeding further to determine what is the nominal species cited by Bittner as *Rhynchonella sellaris* Laube. In 1866, Laube (*Denkschr. k. Akad. Wiss.* Wien 25(2) : 18, pl. 12, fig. 8) had described and figured a species of *Norella* with the name *Spirigera sellaris* Klipstein : that is, he clearly identified his material with *Terebratula sellaris* Klipstein, 1845 (*Beitr. geol. topogr. Kenntn. östl. Alpen* 1 : 214). In so doing, Laube was guilty of a gross misidentification, for the true *Terebratula sellaris* Klipstein is a rhynchonelloid of normal type, with a strong median dorsal fold like that of the Lower Jurassic genus *Homoeorhynchia*. Bittner showed that he was aware of this error, for he cited (*op. cit.* : 85) "? *Rhynchonella sellaris* Laube spec. (syn. *Spirigera sellaris* Klipst. spec. bei Laube . . . non *Terebratula sellaris* Klipst. !)". Had Bittner himself designated the species

in question as the type-species of his new genus *Norella*, then, under the Rules as revised by the London (1958) Congress, that species would be cited as "*Norella sellaris* Bittner", but the Rules do not cover cases of the present type where a species cited by the original author of a generic name under a deliberately misapplied specific name is subsequently designated as the type-species of the genus. Under the Rules as they now stand, therefore, the nominal species designated by Hall & Clarke as the type-species of *Norella* is *Terebratula sellaris* Klipstein, 1845.

4. S. S. Buckman (1918: 15) objected to Hall & Clarke's designation on purely taxonomic grounds, as follows: "It is not the first species described, but is only the first species which happened to be casually mentioned; and it was placed first because it is geologically oldest, not because it is most typical. . . . It may be doubted if their selection of a type which was not one of the actual series described and utilised for observation by Bittner is really valid under the circumstances. . . . Bittner did not in so many words actually mention his genoholotype; but he gave sufficient indication that *R. refractifrons* should be so considered." It is clear from the context that Buckman was speaking in terms of the species actually figured by Laube, and that he considered even this, which is now accepted as a *Norella*, to be unsatisfactory for the purpose. The true *Terebratula sellaris* Klipstein, however, is even more unsuitable, for not only would its acceptance as type-species involve a confusing transfer of the generic name from the group of species to which it has always been applied to another group, but it is itself little known, variously interpreted, and insufficiently described. It is therefore uncertain what the precise new meaning of *Norella* would be if the Rules were to be strictly applied. I propose to give a new name to the species that was actually before Laube, but this nominal species will not be eligible for designation as the type-species of *Norella*, and even if it were so, I am strongly of the opinion that *R. refractifrons* is greatly to be preferred.

5. I therefore request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

(1) to use its plenary powers:

- (a) to suppress all designations of type-species for the nominal genus *Norella* Bittner, 1890, made prior to the ruling now asked for, and
- (b) having done so, to designate the nominal species *Rhynchonella refractifrons* Bittner, 1890, as the type-species of that nominal genus;

(2) to place the generic name *Norella* Bittner, 1890 (gender: feminine), type-species, by designation under the plenary powers in (1)(b) above, *Rhynchonella refractifrons* Bittner, 1890, on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology;

(3) to place the specific name *refractifrons* Bittner, 1890, as published in the binomen *Rhynchonella refractifrons* (type-species of *Norella* Bittner, 1890) on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology;

(4) to place the family-group name NORELLINAE Ager, 1959 (type-genus *Norella* Bittner, 1890) on the Official List of Family-group Names in Zoology.